

In the Claims:

Claims 1-25 (canceled)

26. (currently amended) An assembly comprising:

a vacuum device having a perimeter portion sized and shaped to be positioned against a portion of a patient's body and shell portion disposed inward of the perimeter portion, the shell portion having a generally convex outer surface and a generally concave inner surface, the vacuum device operable for providing an operative space within a patient; and

a multicomponent device for providing access through the shell portion from a point external of the vacuum device to a point within the patient; the multicomponent device comprising detachable first and second members, the first member for providing a first portion of an access passageway, and the second member for providing a second portion of an access passageway;

27. (canceled)

28. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the first member has an open distal tip.

29. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the first member has a closed distal tip.

30. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the first member has a pointed tip selected from the group consisting of bifurcated and non-bifurcated tips.

31. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the first member comprises a relatively rigid body portion and a relatively flexible distal end portion.

32. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 further comprising a cap releasably attachable to the proximal end of at least one of the first member and the second member.

33. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 further comprising a cap releasably attachable to the proximal end of both the first member and the second member.

34. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the first member comprises a tip adapted to pierce a perforable membrane.

35. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the first member comprises at least one opening through a wall of the first member, the at least one opening spaced proximally of the distal end of the first member.

36. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the first member comprises a plurality of openings through the wall of the first member.

37. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein the second member comprises a beveled distal end.

38 (new) The assembly of claim 26 wherein the second member comprises at least one opening through a wall of the second member, the at least one opening spaced proximally of the distal end of the second member.

39. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 comprising a sleeve positionable along an outside surface of the first member.

40. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein at least one of the first and second members comprises a generally transparent wall.

41. (new) The assembly of Claim 26 wherein at least one of the first and second members comprises a non-circular cross section.